

The landscape is monotonous.

Low hills.

Vast, rolling plains covered in tall, dry grass.

After a few hours, the trees gave way to gray flatland.

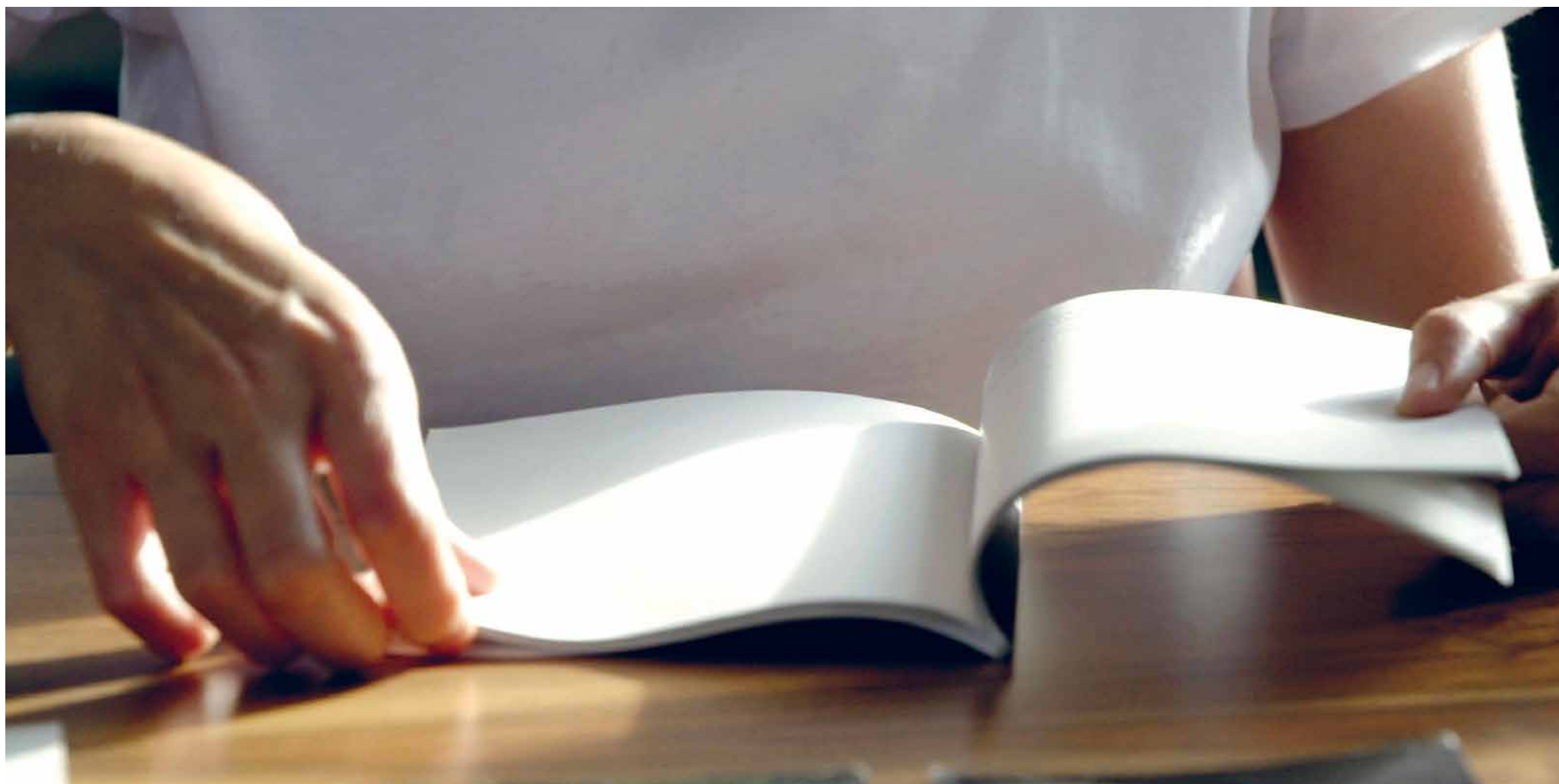


We Haven't Lost Our Way

directed by



Anka Sasnal  
Wilhelm Sasnal



The Burning Lake, a smooth, metallic body of water.

When it's dark, you can see bright patches on the surface.

Characters step forth into the emptiness, they fill the frame for a while and give it life.

This is a place I only know from stories.

The world isn't answering me and neither are you.

There are things I want to tell you about, to experience with you.

Come and see me.







I woke up at 7am, like I always do.

I really wanted to go to work, but then again I didn't.

I really didn't.

I have another room now: a different table, a different bed.

The color of the walls doesn't mean anything.

It's 10 metres wide, wall-to-wall.









synopsis

director's statement

After reading the book that inspired the film, „Till varmare länder” by J.P. Jersild, I didn't anticipate how current this story is. It was not only the matter of its social aspect or the suggestive descriptions of places and reality. It was rather the matter of attitude towards life, often ignored not only by cinema but also in real life. In the last two years, when everyday busyness calmed down, it occurred that there are more people similar to characters in our film than I expected.

Ewa, one of the main characters in the film, is a translator who gives private English lessons to make ends meet. It is not an easy or lucrative job. She lives alone but stays in close relationship with her family. Both her parents and her sister look down at her, treating Ewa as the less successful daughter and more helpless sister. One day, Ewa receives a package with a notebook from her ex-partner Eryk.

Eryk got fired from university. He read his own thoughts during classes and provoked students.

Therefore he didn't meet neither the expectations of the students nor his employers. Having lost his job at the university, he decides to take a journey. He takes his friend Olle with him.

As we learn from the notebook, the journey is not fully planned, its track is uncertain. The destination is called The Burning Lake, a place known only from literature, poetically described as distant or even unreal.

In the film, Eryk's notebook becomes the source of the story. Ewa as a narrator and a guide tells us about the next stages of the journey.

At the same time, she follows the story herself in a literal sense, taking a lonely journey to the described places. She does it not to find her former love but to become an integrated part of the described world. It's like following the footsteps of one's favorite literary character.

Both Ewa and Eryk escape from social control, duties and responsibilities.

Why?

The characters of the film refuse to participate in a world where the most important matter is stability based on work, earning money and meeting expectations of society and family.

They are both perceived as lost introverts and losers who make irrational, surprising decisions that let them feel free from the pressures and expectations of the modern world just for the time being.

They are both seduced by fiction. That is an important factor in understanding their behavior. Experiencing the reality through the literature brings them closer to being a quixotic figure.

Literature and reading books give them a chance to create different spaces for themselves. Tied up together by the common story, they meet people similar to each other on their way – people existing far from the centre of the world, separated from it with „a wall of the forest”.

The sentence „You can read, you can listen to music” repeated several times by Anna, with whom Eryk and Olle stay throughout their

journey, sounds like a motto, but also as evidence of having different connections to reality rather than the common one. For Anna and her husband the escape from reality is not a failure.

The escapism, inner emigration focused on pleasant things only, a kind of hedonism, but also constant refusal to get involved in social mechanisms seem to be more common and a justified attitude towards life.

By taking a journey to The Burning Lake, Eryk isolates from real life but also immerses in less and a less exciting way, proving his weak emotional state. But it's also Eryk who writes down the words: „We Haven't Lost Our Way”, describing both all the characters in the films and all the viewers who identify with them. It gives some sort of certainty about the decisions made, even though these decisions mean wandering more and more aimlessly.

Both his journey and story have their continuation.







Stay a few days longer.  
You can read, you can listen to music.  
You can read, you can listen to music.  
We haven't lost our way.  
Stay a few days.

It's all shrouded in green.  
The forest is a wall between us.

I have another room now:  
a different table, a different bed.

The forest is a wall between us.

I watch families.  
'My turn! My turn!' the child cries.  
'My turn! My turn!'

As for me, it's the dawn that scares me most.  
I think I read that somewhere already.



## cast

### Andrzej Konopka

Born in 1969. Theater, film and television actor. He graduated from the State Higher School of Theater in Krakow. He worked at the Słowacki Theater in Krakow and later on at New Theater in Łódź. Finally he settled in Warsaw. He starred in such prominent Polish movies as „25 years of Innocence” by Jan Holoubek „After Image” by Andrzej Wajda, „Spoor” by Agnieszka Holland, „The Lure” by Agnieszka Smoczyńska or TV Series „Wataha” for HBO. Directors want to work with him not only because he’s a good actor, but also because his sense of humour.



### Agnieszka Żulewska

Born in 1987. Graduated from The National Film School in Łódź. She started her career in television. Her performance in short film „The Kiss” dir. Filip Gieldon brought her various awards. For her role in feature film „Chemo” dir. Bartosz Prokopowicz she won Zbyszek Cybulski Award for „young actors distinguished by outstanding individuality”. She starred in movies like „Demon” dir. Marcin Wrona, „Love Tasting” dir. Dawid Nickel or „Silent Land” by Aga Woszczyńska. She is also well known for her theater work at one of the most renowned stages in Poland - TR Warszawa.



directors

### Anka Sasnal

Anka Sasnal is a director, an editor and a scriptwriter. She studied Polish Literature at Pedagogical University of Krakow and Gender Studies at Jagiellonian University in Krakow. She lives and works in Krakow, Poland.

### Wilhelm Sasnal

Wilhelm Sasnal is a painter and filmmaker. He studied architecture at the Krakow Polytechnic in Poland and painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow, Poland. He lives and works in Krakow, Poland.









specifications

feature film

film genredrama

duration74 min

shooting format4k

picturecolour

frame rate25 fps

screen ratio2:1

sound5.1

spoken languagePolish

subtitlesEnglish

available formatsDCP, Blu-Ray

cast and crew

written by	Anka Sasnal	cast	Andrzej Konopka Agnieszka Żulewska Oskar Hamerski Małgorzata Zawadzka Roman Gancarczyk Rita Sasnal
directed by	Anka Sasnal Wilhelm Sasnal		
produced by	Balapolis Agata Szymańska Magdalena Kamińska	director of photography	Wilhelm Sasnal
co-financed production	Polish Film Institute	sound designer	Igor Kłaczyński
co-producers	Anton Kern Gallery, New York Anka Sasnal Wilhelm Sasnal Krakowskie Biuro Festiwalowe	music by	Jakub Ziolek
		edited by	Anka Sasnal Paweł Gardynik
		production designer	Agata Biskup
executive producer	Luna Film Paweł Przywara	costume designer	Ewelina Gąsior
production managers	Ewa Przywara Paweł Przywara	make-up artists	Aleksandra Dutkiewicz Julka Kapek



contact

Agata Szymańska  
mob +48 514 593 757  
szymanska.agata@gmail.com

Magdalena Kamińska  
mob +48 601 980 737  
magdalenakaminska@me.com

balapolis.com

Festivals  
Pascale Ramonda  
pascale@pascaleramonda.com



The Burning Lake was formed by accident.  
Standing on its shore, one can see the horizon.  
Its surface is smooth and metallic.  
When it's dark, you can see bright patches on the surface,  
it's like a hidden light was shining on them.  
When I get back, we should make a fresh start.





**kbf:**

**B A L A P O L I S**

Anton Kern Gallery

